

**PRINCIPLES OF IMMUNOLOGY.** Edited by N. R. Rose, F. Milgrom and C. J. van Oss. Second Edition (Pp 544; illustrated. £9.50). New York, Toronto, London: MacMillan Publishing Co. Inc., Collier MacMillan Canada Ltd., London: Bailliere Tindall. 1979.

IMMUNOLOGY used to be the hobby of a sub-population of microbiologists and this book expresses such origins in terms more or less appropriate to the late 1970's. However, by missing the much wider ethos of modern immunology I feel that it does a disservice to the subject and therefore to any student who chooses to use it as an introductory text.

The book is divided into three "Units"—I, Basic Immunology (12 chapters), II—Clinical Immunology (13 chapters) and III—Applied Immunology (4 chapters).

Unit I has some good chapters—I liked the one on the complement system for example—but others are weak, such as those on cell-mediated cytotoxicity (where are the NK cells?) and phagocytosis (what about oxidative mechanisms in bacterial killing?). There are many other texts which give a better introduction to basic immunology than this.

Unit II although described as clinical deals mainly with the pathogenesis of infective and other disturbances of the immune system together with some information on diagnostic methods. The student would find little 'real' clinical material here such as the clinical features or management of patients with these disorders.

Unit III exhibits a curious choice of subjects. The chapter entitled Diagnostic and Therapeutic Applications of Immunology is concerned with serodiagnosis of infections and prophylactic immunizations, again emphasizing the microbiological bias of the book. However, even within the microbiological context it is not immediately clear why a whole chapter is devoted to immunoelectronmicroscopy in a book where the student would be hard pressed to find the principles of a complement fixation text or how to interpret it.

T.A.McN.

**APLASTIC ANAEMIA.** Edited by C. G. Geary. (Pp 249. £12.50). London: Balliere Tindall. 1978.

ALTHOUGH sometimes clearly due to a drug reaction, in many cases aplastic anaemia comes unheralded by any apparent cause. With correction of anaemia by transfusion, the patient again often feels well and considers himself restored to health. Meanwhile however, his peripheral blood count may signal the relentless destruction of a whole organ, the bone marrow, which will lead to death in a matter of weeks or months. Having no therapy effective in arresting this progressive marrow failure, the perplexed haematologist too often has had to attend his patient armed only with encouraging words and a hope that the disease would abate before the marrow was irreparably damaged.

This book is evidence that at last progress is being made in the understanding of the enigma of aplastic anaemia and that already the first steps have been taken in the development of effective treatment. Edited by Dr. Geary, there are eight other contributors who deal with various aspects of the disorder. In an excellent first chapter recent knowledge of haemopoietic stem cells is reviewed and there is a discussion on the mechanisms by which marrow hypoplasia may be brought about. Other sections deal with the diverse ways in which drug reactions may damage the marrow, the clinical and laboratory features of aplastic anaemia and the disease in childhood. Especially interesting is the chapter on treatment by bone marrow transplantation. Not only does this technique promise to be important in treatment of a number of bone marrow disorders in the years to come, but it was the early attempts at marrow transplantation which indicated the immunologic cause of some instances of marrow aplasia. Further evidence of the interaction of the immune system and the bone marrow is described in the section on red cell aplasia.

This book brings together present knowledge of aplastic anaemia and each chapter is well endowed with references. It is on a topic about which previously little was known, but which is now the subject of considerable interest and research activity. The newer concepts of marrow function and failure which are emerging are of such fundamental importance to haematology that this book is recommended reading for any haematologist whatever his special interest.

J.H.R.